



NEWS RELEASE NR 51-09

Contact: Philip R. Carrizosa, 415-865-8044

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Site Selected for New Porterville Courthouse

Site Selected for New Courthouse to Meet Community Needs

San Francisco—The State Public Works Board (SPWB) today approved the acquisition of a site in Porterville for the new courthouse for the Superior Court of Tulare County. The 7.4 acre property at 300 East Olive Avenue, currently the site of the Porterville Fairgrounds and Municipal Ballpark, is owned by the City of Porterville. On August 18, 2009, the Porterville City Council approved sale of the parcel for \$2.14 million, its appraised value, to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the agency responsible for building the new courthouse. The City of Porterville plans to relocate the fairgrounds to a location near the airport.

The new nine-courtroom courthouse will be approximately 90,000 square feet. It will replace the overcrowded and inadequate three-courtroom facility in Porterville and a one-courtroom facility in Tulare and will include additional courtrooms for proposed new judgeships as well as space for court administration, court clerk, court security operations and holding, and building support. The project will also include approximately 315 on-site surface parking spaces for staff and visitors.

Judge Glade F. Roper of the Tulare Superior Court, a member of the Project Advisory Group for the new courthouse, said, “Our current building was designed when there were probably 20,000 people who depended on it; now there are over 150,000 people who depend on it. We’re really looking forward to the new courthouse. We think it’s going to be a showcase for the community; it will just make justice a whole lot smoother.”

SPWB approval clears the way for close of escrow on the property, expected by November 30, 2009. The AOC is proceeding with architectural design, for which it has engaged the firm of CO Architects. Design is expected to proceed through mid-2011, with construction scheduled to start in fall 2011. The courthouse project, with a total estimated cost of \$91.2 million, is scheduled for completion in early 2013. Project funds come from the State Court Facilities Construction Fund, from court fees and fines, not the state’s General Fund. More about the project, including a new short video about it, can be found on the California Courts Web site:

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects_tulare.htm.

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